European External Action Service (EEAS)

Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare: Statement by the Spokesperson

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On the Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare, the European Union (EU) honours those who have died and suffered as a result of the use of these heinous weapons.

No one should use chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time or under any circumstances. Their use is a violation of international law and can amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

This year also marks the 100th anniversary of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases. The world’s declared stocks of chemical weapons have been verifiably destroyed under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Despite progress made, we are still witness to the horrific consequences of the use of these inhumane weapons. In Syria, they have caused hundreds of victims, including children. Chemical weapons have also been used Malaysia and Iraq. Russia has used prohibited toxic chemicals for assassination purposes in the UK and in Russia itself. There is a growing number of reported uses of riot control agents by the Russian Federation against Ukrainian soldiers, with thousands of victims. The use of these agents as a method of warfare is prohibited by the Convention.

The re-emergence of chemical weapons remains one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The EU reaffirms its strong support to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for their extensive efforts in eliminating chemical weapons and identifying perpetrators.

Background

The EU is a strong supporter of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and its implementing body, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), both politically and financially. Since 2004, the EU has provided EUR 53 million in voluntary contributions to support OPCW activities and operations. The EU supports national and international efforts to hold accountable those responsible for the use of chemical weapons.

Under its regime of restrictive measures dedicated to fighting the proliferation and use of chemical weapons and their precursors, the EU has imposed restrictive measures on persons and entities in Russia linked to the Salisbury attack in 2018, the poisoning of Mr

Navalny in 2020, as well as entities belonging to the Russian Armed Forces for their role in development and use of riot control agents (RCA) as a method of warfare on the frontlines in Ukraine. By November 2025, the Ukrainian authorities have registered 11,299 cases of RCA use leaving thousands of soldiers injured. As regards Syria, the EU has imposed restrictive measures on an entity and persons responsible for development and use of chemical weapons, in particular for the attacks that took place in August 2013 in Ghouta, in March 2017 in Ltamenah, and in 2018 in Douma.

Source: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/day-remembrance-all-victims-chemical-warfare-statement-spokesperson_en